

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE FOR THE STATE REGISTRATION OF NURSES.

A Meeting of the Central Committee for the State Registration of Nurses was held at 429, Strand, W.C., on Saturday, April 1st, at 2.30 p.m. Miss Helen L. Pearse was in the Chair.

The following Nurses' Organisations were represented: The Royal British Nurses' Association, the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, the Registered Nurses' Parliamentary Council, the Fever Nurses' Association, and the National Union of Trained Nurses. Apologies were received from delegates of the Scottish Nurses' Association and Irish Nurses' Association at inability to attend.

RECORD OF CERTIFICATES SECURED.

The correspondence between the Committee and the Minister of Health on the question of depriving Registered Nurses of the record of their Certificates on the State Register was read. Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, Hon. Secretary, reported that an amended First Schedule providing for the record of Certificates was proposed by her, and agreed to by the General Nursing Council at its meeting on February 3rd. This amended Schedule had been signed by the Minister, and agreed to by Parliament, so that the prompt action of the Free Nurses' organisations had averted a very grave injury to Existing and Intermediate Certificated Nurses, advocated by Miss Cox-Davies, Miss Dowbiggin, Miss Peterkin, and Dr. Goodall.

This announcement was received with applause.

EJECTION OF THE COMMITTEE'S NOMINEES FROM THE REGISTRATION COMMITTEE AND THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE, GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL.

The Hon. Secretary presented a Report. It dealt with the policy of the General Nursing Council in framing two new Rules—(1) 9 (a), with the object of admitting to the Register members of the College of Nursing, Ltd., as second-hand entrants, excusing such entrants from producing documentary evidence of their professional qualifications to the Council, thus risking the correctness of the Register, and together, by special Instruction from the Council, giving the Registrar power to "pass" such applicants for registration without any investigation by the Registration Committee.

And (2) 43 (2) designed to eject two of the nominees of the Central Committee from office

on the Standing Committees of the Council—a policy which had been ruthlessly put into force. At the Meeting of the General Nursing Council held on March 17th Mrs. Fenwick had been (by secret ballot) removed from the Registration Committee, and a laywoman substituted, and Miss Susan Villiers had been ejected from the Education and Examination Committee and a laywoman substituted, thus depriving Fever Nurses of expert representation on the Committee, as provided for in the Schedule of the Act for the Constitution of the Council, which states that "The Minister, in making appointments under this provision, shall have regard to the desirability of including in the Council persons having experience in the various forms of nursing"—a provision honourably fulfilled by Dr. Addison when he appointed Miss Villiers, an expert, to represent the exceedingly important branch of Fever Nursing on the Council.

The indignation of many members present was expressed, and the Report was warmly acclaimed and adopted, and it was directed that it should be placed on the Minutes.

RESOLUTIONS.

The following Resolutions were unanimously adopted, and the Hon. Secretary was directed to forward copies to the Minister of Health, to the Chairman of the General Nursing Council, and certain members of Parliament and organs of the press:—

RESOLUTION I.

That this meeting desires to record its warm approval of the policy of its nominees on the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick and Miss S. Villiers, and to offer them a very cordial vote of thanks for the firm stand they have taken in protecting the best interests of nurses, and the prestige of the Nursing Profession during the recent crisis in the Council.

Furthermore the Meeting desires to express its strong disapproval of the methods by which the majority of the members of the Council agreed to deprive Mrs. Fenwick and Miss Villiers of office on the Registration and Education Committees of the Council, and the profession of their invaluable expert services, and calls upon the Minister of Health to make a searching enquiry into the whole conduct of business by the General Nursing Council.

RESOLUTION II.

That this Meeting has learned with indignation of the threat made by the Minister of Health in the House of Commons on Wednesday, March 22nd, that if new Rules, obnoxious to large numbers of nurses were not agreed, he would move the repeal of the Nurses' Registration Act for England and Wales.

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